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RIGHTS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

CZECH REPUBLIC

SUMMARY

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by a combination of special laws, such as the Law on Sign Language, and general legislation like the Building Code. Provisions similar to those of the ADA have been enacted, covering a range of issues.

Scope of Coverage.

Under a number of different laws, the following protections are offered:

- Employment—employers to create employment opportunities for the disabled.
- Programs to improve skills and qualifications of the disabled.
- Jobs in some cases reserved for the disabled.
- Public transit access required, with priority seats reserved.
- Free transportation and reserved seats in street cars and buses and 75% reduction in fares on trains for those in wheelchairs under the Social Security Law as amended in 2001.
- Public accommodation measures, including marked parking areas, automatic doors, leveled pavements, and accessible toilets under consideration.
- Buildings with more than three apartments or that are intended to house persons with disabilities, along with buildings designed for public use, are covered to provisions requiring accessibility.
- The Law on Sign Language states that the deaf and hearing impaired have the right to the use of and education about sign language and to the free services on an interpreter in the handling of official business, when in contact with medical services, and in schools, including universities.

Legislative Objective.

The purpose of the various provisions on persons with disabilities is to improve their living conditions. Equality of treatment is not addressed.

Public Policy Implementation.

New legislation is considered in consultation with disability organizations, whose role is to advocate rights and improve services. There is a coordination committee that reports to the Prime Minister's Office; it includes representatives of the concerned Ministries and of organizations of persons with disabilities. In addition to improving coordination of programs and legislation and promoting effective use of resources, the committee is designed to increase public awareness.

Enforcement and Remedies.

Compliance is enforced by the appropriate government offices, such as the Ministry of Local Development for the Building Code. Employers must report yearly compliance with hiring requirements. In addition, legal remedy for infringements of the rights of the disabled is available through the courts, and a non-judicial mechanism is also available through the public administrative offices.

Affirmative Defenses.

No information.